

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, at the close of last year, it was obvious: America was sliding into a serious recession. And to this very day, the American people are struggling in this difficult economy.

Well, in February, this Democrat Congress passed a \$1 trillion stimulus bill, and the results are starting to come in: 1.6 million jobs lost since the stimulus bill was signed. Unemployment was 12.4 million; it is 14.7 million today. The unemployment rate was 7.5 percent; it is 9.5 percent today, the highest in 26 years. And, remarkably, the President last week said that the recovery bill had "done its job." Done its job?

Look, the American people are starting to get wise to the Democrat plan here. They understand the Democrat agenda is nothing more than more government, more debt, more spending, a national energy tax, and a government takeover of health care.

The Republican plan: fiscal discipline for Washington, D.C. and tax relief for working families, small businesses and family farms.

The American people are hurting. They deserve a real plan for a real recovery, not more spending, more taxes, more debt, and more unemployment.

□ 1015

LET'S FIX OUR BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Yesterday, the Senate voted to extend the border wall between the U.S. and Mexico and to expand E-Verify, making this flawed employment verification system both mandatory and permanent for Federal contractors.

The American people don't want to see political posturing; they want to see real, meaningful immigration reform. These provisions attempt to enforce immigration laws without getting to the heart of the issue. Building a bigger wall at the U.S.-Mexico border is going to spend millions of taxpayer dollars and will not stop illegal immigration; reforming our immigration system will.

Forcing Federal contractors to implement a costly employment verification program isn't going to stop illegal immigration. Instead, a mandatory E-Verify clause would force cash-strapped small businesses to make the painful decisions between losing government contracts and spending millions of dollars on a flawed and expensive employment verification system.

It's not that we shouldn't talk about border security or employment verification. We must. These are conversations we need to have as part of a larger debate on comprehensive immigration reform, not as amendments to an appropriations bill. Instead of trying to

act tough, Members of Congress should be tough and fix our broken immigration system.

PRESCRIPTION OF THE DAY: PHYSICIAN PAYMENT REFORM

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, here's the problem: Every 6, 12, or 18 months for the last several years, doctors who participate in Medicare, a public option, have faced steep payment cuts, threatening their ability to keep their doors open.

This Congress, and many Congresses before it, instead of biting the bullet and working to find a long-term and permanent solution to the problem, passes short-term fixes, leaving America's doctors uncertain about their ability to continue serving our Nation's seniors and practicing medicine. Doctors need a stable and reasonable predictor of their Medicare reimbursement rates, and the current formula, the Sustainable Growth Rate formula, is flawed and outdated.

For the past several years I have introduced legislation that will correct this formula, and it is incumbent upon this Congress to address this issue. We need a permanent fix. Our doctors are forced to live under the ax of yearly cuts just for the privilege of seeing our Nation's seniors.

Reforms to the system are important. I urge constituents to go to the Web site healthcaucus.org, weigh in on this issue, and stay abreast on all of the health care debates that are going on in this Congress.

THE AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY AND SECURITY ACT

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the role of American energy sources as articulated in the recently passed Clean Energy and Security Act.

The leadership of the minority party claims that this legislation discriminates against energy sources such as coal, nuclear, and hydroelectric power. Nothing could be further from the truth. This act will make historic investments in coal technology. That's the reason that coal-dependent companies like Duke Energy and American Electric Power, as well as the United Mineworkers, have endorsed the bill.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act will strengthen market incentives for nuclear energy by deducting new nuclear from the baseline of renewable electricity standards. That's why Exelon and Entergy, America's first and second largest nuclear energy producers, have endorsed the bill.

The American Clean Energy and Security Act will create strong incentives

for new hydroelectric generation when new turbines are placed on existing dams. That's why Pacific Gas and Electric and Seattle City Light, two utilities with substantial investments in hydroelectric, have endorsed the bill.

Mr. Speaker, don't take my word for it. These companies that rely on coal, nuclear, and hydro would not support the bill if it didn't help their industry.

HEALTH CARE'S PUBLIC OPTION

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to see a so-called "public option" as a part of any health care reform plan. The key question for any public health option is, would this plan be subsidized with taxpayer money? If not, then the public option would simply be a nonprofit insurance business which anyone could create now. But if taxpayer money will subsidize this option, and I believe it will, the public option will only serve to crowd out other choices.

A public option will not save any money; it will compete and undermine private plans. And I'm afraid many companies will end up dumping employees under the public plan. A public option is nothing more than a back door to government-owned health care which will ultimately result in rationed care and bureaucrats in charge of your health care choices.

COMBATING OBESITY IN AMERICA

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, as I travel throughout my district, the primary concern I hear over and over again from Republicans, Independents, and Democrats, is that we need to reform our Nation's health care system. However, any meaningful reform must begin by taking control over the skyrocketing costs of health care. As a clinical dietitian for 25 years, I know that this can only be achieved with serious commitment to healthy living and combating obesity in America.

A recent study by the National Center for Education Statistics found that one out of every five American 4-year-olds is obese. I would like to repeat that. One out of every five 4-year-olds in America is obese. Why is this a problem? The CDC estimated recently that the total cost of obesity in the United States is \$117 billion.

Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, if we are serious about reforming our health care system, we need to get serious about combating obesity. I urge my colleagues to join me in ensuring healthy living, wellness, and prevention are major components of the final health care bill. The success of our reform depends on it.